

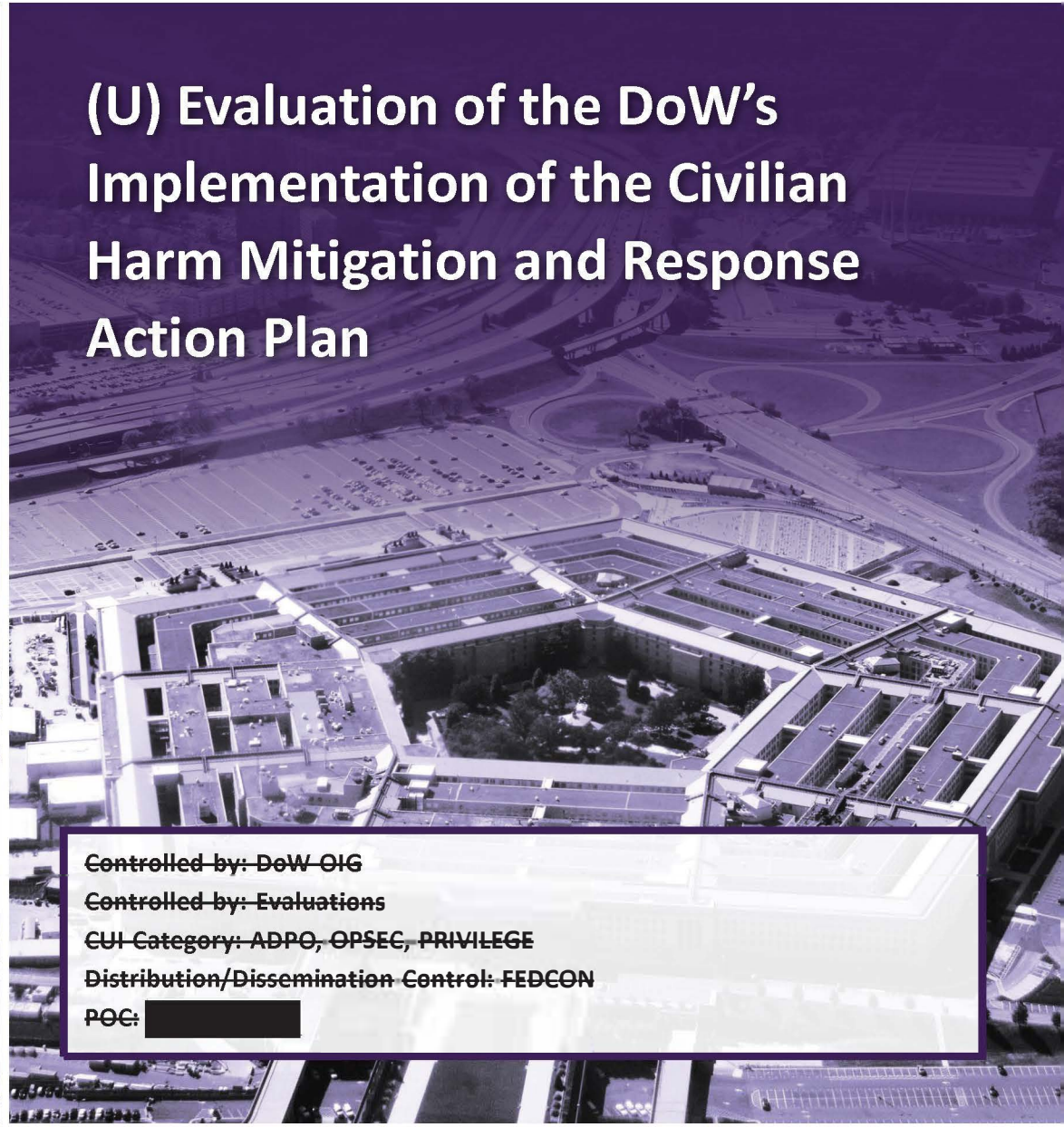


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INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of War

MAY 13, 2026



(U) Evaluation of the DoW's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan

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(U) Results in Brief

(U) Evaluation of the DoW's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan

May 13, 2026

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to assess how effectively the DoW implemented the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP) and whether the implementation complied with the CHMR-AP's guidance and directed timelines.

(U) Background

(U) On August 25, 2022, the DoW released the CHMR-AP, which outlines 11 objectives with 133 implementing actions across the objectives. The CHMR-AP distributed implementing actions across four phases, with one phase each fiscal year from FY 2022 through the end of FY 2025.

(U) Finding

(U) The DoW made progress implementing the CHMR-AP. By February 2025, the DoW created a civilian harm mitigation and response (CHMR) Steering Committee; hired dedicated personnel; issued DoW-wide and command-level instructions and policies; had a CHMR data management platform on track for initial use on October 1, 2025; and established the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence (CP CoE).

(U) However, DoW Components did not fully implement any of the CHMR-AP objectives by the end of FY 2025. Challenges with civilian hiring delays, contingent actions missing planned deadlines, and inadequate guidance and oversight from the CHMR Steering Committee hindered standardization and full implementation.

(U) Furthermore, in February 2025, the Acting Under Secretary of War for Policy and the Secretary of the Army both

(U) Finding (cont'd)

(U) proposed major changes to CHMR-AP implementation. Although the Secretary of War has not announced a decision on these proposals, DoW Components ended funding for the CHMR data management platform, stopped holding Steering Committee meetings, lost or reassigned many of the personnel dedicated to CHMR, and lost personnel and leadership at the CP CoE.

(U) As a result, the DoW may not comply with its civilian casualties and harm policy (DoDI 3000.17), a policy required by Federal law. According to Joint Staff and combatant command officials, eliminating CHMR funding and personnel also decreases readiness and increases risk to DoW personnel, mission success, and military objectives.

(U) Recommendations

(U) We recommend that the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy develop and implement a plan to ensure DoW complies with the specifications of federal law. In addition, the Director of the Joint Staff should work with the CP CoE to provide sample materials for components to use to expedite implementation.

(U) Management Comments and Our Response

(U) The Under Secretary of War for Policy partially agreed and stated that reviews of the CP CoE and related DoW policy were underway. He did not agree with the need to develop and implement a plan to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Therefore, this recommendation is unresolved. We request that the Under Secretary of War for Policy provide specific details about how they plan to implement this recommendation.

(U) The Vice Director of the Joint Staff partially agreed but did not propose actions that addressed the specifics of the recommendation. Therefore, this recommendation is unresolved. We request that the Vice Director provide specific details about how they plan to implement this recommendation. Please see the Recommendations Table on the next page for the status of recommendations.

(U) Recommendations Table

(U) Management	Recommendations Unresolved	Recommendations Resolved	Recommendations Closed
Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy	2	None	None
Director of the Joint Staff	1	None	None (U)

(U) Please provide Management Comments by June 12, 2026.

(U) Note: The following categories are used to describe agency management’s comments to individual recommendations.

- **(U) Unresolved** – Management has not agreed to implement the recommendation or has not proposed actions that will address the recommendation.
- **(U) Resolved** – Management agreed to implement the recommendation or has proposed actions that will address the underlying finding that generated the recommendation.
- **(U) Closed** – The DoW OIG verified that the agreed-upon corrective actions were implemented.



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OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF WAR
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500

May 13, 2026

**MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF WAR FOR POLICY
DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF**

**SUBJECT: (U) Evaluation of the DoW's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation
and Response Action Plan (Report No. DOWIG-2026-084)**

(U) This final report provides the results of the DoW Office of Inspector General's evaluation. We previously provided copies of the draft report and requested written comments on the recommendations. We considered management's comments on the draft report when preparing the final report. These comments are included in the report.

(U) This report contains two recommendations that are considered unresolved because the Under Secretary of War for Policy and Vice Director of the Joint Staff did not fully address the recommendations presented in the report. Therefore, the recommendations remain open. We will track these recommendations until management agrees to take actions that we determine to be sufficient to meet the intent of the recommendations and management officials submit adequate documentation showing that all agreed-on actions are completed.

(U) DoD Instruction 7650.03 requires that recommendations be resolved promptly. Therefore, please provide us within 30 days your response concerning specific actions in process or alternative corrective actions proposed on the recommendations. Send your response to [REDACTED] if unclassified or [REDACTED] if classified SECRET.

(U) If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED].

Bryan Clark

Bryan T. Clark
Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations
Programs, Combatant Commands, and Operations

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(U) Introduction

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to assess how effectively the DoW implemented the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP) and whether the implementation complied with the CHMR-AP's guidance and directed timelines.¹

(U) Background

(U) The U.S. military has a longstanding commitment to comply with rules for conducting war, including limiting harm to civilians. According to the "DoD Law of War Manual," the laws of armed conflict originate from the rules of war agreed to by George Washington and the British during the Revolutionary War and Abraham Lincoln's "Instructions for the Government of the Armies of the United States in the Field," used during the Civil War.² The rules for conducting war are codified in policy as DoD Directive 2311.01, "DoD Law of War Program."³ The law of war principles require DoW personnel to distinguish between armed forces and the civilian population and take precautions to protect the civilian population and civilian objects. According to the "DoD Law of War Manual," civilian harm and damage frustrate rather than accomplish the mission.

(U) Civilian Casualty Policies

(U) In 2016, Executive Order 13732 described pre- and post-strike measures the United States would take to address civilian casualties in military operations.⁴ The Executive Order directed the DoW to review or investigate incidents involving civilian casualties, consider information from all relevant sources, and take measures to mitigate future civilian harm. Additionally, the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) issued policies on civilian casualty mitigation, reporting, and response. For example, in 2016, USCENTCOM issued Command Policy Letter Number 85, "Civilian Casualty Policy," which emphasized the importance of Law

¹ (U) DoD Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP), August 25, 2022.

(U) This report contains information that has been redacted because it was identified by the Department of War as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) that is not releasable outside the Executive Branch. CUI is Government-created or owned unclassified information that allows for, or requires, safeguarding and dissemination controls in accordance with laws, regulations, or Government-wide policies.

² (U) DoD Office of the General Counsel, "DoD Law of War Manual," June 2015 (Updated December 2016).

(U) At the time, the DoD Office of the General Counsel was the name used for the currently named DoW Office of the General Counsel.

³ (U) DoD Directive 2311.01, "DoD Law of War Program," July 2, 2020.

⁴ (U) Executive Order 13732, "United States Policy on Pre- and Post-Strike Measures to Address Civilian Casualties in U.S. Operations Involving the Use of Force," July 1, 2016.

(U) of Armed Conflict (LOAC) training, battlespace awareness, and taking all feasible precautions when conducting attacks to reduce the likelihood of civilian casualties.⁵ USCENTCOM recognized that preventing civilian casualties was not always possible, and, as a result, issued Command Policy Letter Number 97 in 2018 to establish “a uniform, unbiased, and transparent” process for reporting, assessing, tracking, investigating, and publicly releasing information on allegations and incidents of civilian casualties in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility.⁶

(U) Statutory Requirements for a Department-Wide Civilian Casualty Policy and Civilian Protection Center of Excellence

(U) The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2019 added a note, “Responsibility for Policy on Civilian Casualty Matters,” to 10 U.S.C. § 134 that required the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to designate a senior civilian official responsible for civilian casualty policy.⁷ On October 23, 2018, the Under Secretary of War for Policy (USW[P]) designated the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy as this senior official.⁸ The official is required under 10 U.S.C. § 134 to “develop, coordinate, and oversee compliance with the policy of the Department relating to civilian casualties resulting from United States military operations” and ensure that the policy provides for specific elements, including:

- (U) developing and sharing lessons learned and best practices for reducing the likelihood of civilian casualties, integrating civilian protection into operational planning, and identifying cause(s) of civilian casualties;
- (U) providing public affairs guidance related to alleged or confirmed civilian casualties resulting from U.S. operations;
- (U) providing publicly available means to submit allegations of civilian casualties to the Government;
- (U) providing regular engagement with intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations; and,
- (U) developing, retaining, and disseminating practices to prevent, mitigate, or respond to civilian casualties.

(U) Section 1082 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2023, codified at 10 U.S.C. § 184, requires the Secretary of Defense to establish and operate the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence (CP CoE).

⁵ (U) USCENTCOM Command Policy Letter Number 85, “Civilian Casualty Policy,” September 1, 2016.

⁶ (U) USCENTCOM Command Policy Letter Number 97, “USCENTCOM Policy for Reporting and Responding to Civilian Casualty Allegations and Incidents,” January 22, 2018.

⁷ (U) For the purposes of this report, we will refer to the note, “Responsibility for Policy on Civilian Casualty Matters,” as amended, by the short form of 10 U.S.C. § 134 for readability.

⁸ (U) At the time, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was the name used for the currently named Under Secretary of War for Policy (USW[P]) and the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was the name used for the currently named Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy.

(U) The DoW's Implementation of 10 U.S.C. § 134

(U) On January 31, 2020, the individual Performing the Duties of the Deputy USW(P) issued a memorandum to develop a DoD Instruction (DoDI) on minimizing and responding to civilian harm in military operations, consistent with Executive Order 13732 as amended by Executive Order 13862 and 10 U.S.C. § 134.⁹

On December 21, 2023, the Office of the USW(P) (OUSW[P]) issued DoDI 3000.17, "Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response."¹⁰ The Instruction states in its purpose that, consistent with 10 U.S.C. § 134, it "establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for civilian harm mitigation and response, helps implement U.S. Government policy prescribed in Executive Order 13732, helps implement the August 25, 2022 [CHMR-AP], and will be implemented through the phased approach established by the CHMR-AP."

(U) Overview of the CHMR-AP and Its Structure

(U) On January 27, 2022, the Secretary of War (SecWar) issued a memorandum directing the creation of the CHMR-AP to improve how the DoW mitigates and responds to civilian harm resulting from military operations.¹¹ The memorandum states that the CHMR-AP will incorporate and build on previous studies of DoW policies and practices for mitigating and responding to incidents of civilian harm, as well as investigations and reviews of specific incidents. According to a Government Accountability Office report, nine studies published from 2013 through 2022 were "fundamental for informing the development of the action plan."¹²

⁹ (U) At the time, the individual Performing the Duties of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was the name used for the currently named Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy.

¹⁰ (U) At the time, the office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was the name used for the currently named office of the Under Secretary of War for Policy.

¹¹ (U) At the time, the Secretary of Defense was the name used for the currently named Secretary of War.

¹² (U) Government Accountability Office Report No. GAO-24-106257, "Civilian Harm: DoD Should Take Actions to Enhance Its Plan for Mitigation and Response Efforts," March 2024. The report references nine key studies published by the RAND Corporation, U.S. Army Forces Command, DoW Office of Inspector General, U.S. Air Force Inspector General, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Joint Staff from April 2013 to March 2022.

(U) On August 25, 2022, the SecWar released the CHMR-AP, which outlines 11 objectives with multiple actions in each objective, for a total of 133 actions. Although some actions have a clear office of primary responsibility, which may be supported by one or more Components, many actions are assigned to all of the combatant commands (CCMDs) or all of the Military Departments and are not considered complete until every assigned Component completes the action.

(U) Table 1 shows that actions in the CHMR-AP are sequenced by phases aligning with fiscal years—Phase 0 through the end of FY 2022, Phase 1 through FY 2023, Phase 2 through FY 2024, and Phase 3 through FY 2025.¹³ From the release of the CHMR-AP, DoW Components worked to complete the 133 actions by the end of FY 2025. The CHMR-AP describes the phased sequencing, stating that some actions could “be taken immediately, while others will require additional time to implement, including some actions that are contingent on one another.” The CHMR-AP also states that some actions, such as updating policies and doctrine, may begin in one phase and continue into other phases.

(U) *Table 1. Distribution of CHMR-AP Actions by Objective and Phase*

(U) Objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
Phase 0 (FY 2022)	3	4	2	2	0	4	2	2	1	1	5	26
Phase 1 (FY 2023)		3	9	12	10	6	9	5	6	9	3	73
Phase 2 (FY 2024)	1	2	6	0	0	3	2	1	4	3	3	24
Phase 3 (FY 2025)		2	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
Total	4	11	17	14	11	14	15	9	12	14	12	133 (U)

(U) Source: DoW OIG analysis of the CHMR-AP

¹³ (U) Action 1.d. was assigned to Phases 1 through 3. The remaining actions were assigned to a single phase.

(U) Finding

(U) The DoW Made Progress Implementing the CHMR-AP, but Did Not Meet the Plan's Objectives by the End of FY 2025

(U) DoW Components made progress implementing the CHMR-AP. We found that, by February 2025, DoW mostly completed implementation of 7 of 11 objectives and partially completed 4. This included creating a CHMR Steering Committee, establishing a CP CoE, issuing DoW-wide and some command-level CHMR instructions, hiring dedicated personnel, and developing a CHMR data management platform that was on track for initial use on October 1, 2025.

(U) However, because of persistent challenges, proposed changes, and pulled funding, DoW Components did not fully implement any of the CHMR-AP objectives by the end of FY 2025, the end of the CHMR-AP's final scheduled phase of implementation. For example, 15 DoW Components reported difficulty hiring qualified personnel. Also, some CHMR-AP actions necessary to support other actions were delayed. Additionally, inadequate guidance and oversight from the CHMR Steering Committee hindered standardization and full implementation. For example, the Steering Committee did not assign the offices primarily responsible for completing actions until December 2024 and did not adequately track implementation status.

(U) Furthermore, in February 2025, the Acting USW(P) and the Secretary of the Army separately proposed to the Secretary of War changes to the CHMR-AP, CP CoE, DoDI 3000.17, and related dedicated personnel.¹⁴ As of April 2026, the SecWar had not announced a decision on the proposals. Although no decision has been announced, DoW Components stalled their CHMR-AP implementation and reversed progress in some areas. For example, CCMD officials stated that they were concerned about proposed cuts to the CHMR program and the impact on their capability to carry out CHMR responsibilities directed in the CHMR-AP and DoDI 3000.17. One CCMD official stated that they had largely divested their CHMR personnel, functions, and responsibilities as of March 2025. Another CCMD official stated that they did not want to spend resources on actions or make future commitments for a program that may be significantly changed.

¹⁴ (U) At the time, the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy was the name used for the currently named Under Secretary of War for Policy.

~~(CUI)~~ As a result, the DoW may not comply with DoDI 3000.17, the policy required by 10 U.S.C. § 134, because the DoW did not fully implement the CHMR-AP. The Office of the Secretary of War (OSW) and DoW Components lack many of the personnel and tools designed to execute DoDI 3000.17 and meet the statutory purposes of the CP CoE. [REDACTED]

(U) The DoW Made Progress Implementing the CHMR-AP

(U) DoW Components made progress implementing the CHMR-AP, using CHMR funds and personnel resources for a variety of initiatives across the DoW. Overall, the DoW created a civilian harm mitigation and response (CHMR) enterprise, developed policies and guidance, updated doctrine, and began incorporating CHMR into DoW processes such as training and exercises.

(U) The DoW Established a CHMR Enterprise

(U) The DoW created a CHMR enterprise to execute the program across the Department. It was led by a CHMR Steering Committee chaired by the USW(P), Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Under Secretary of War (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer that met seven times from December 2022 to December 2024.¹⁵ The OUSW(P) was the Executive Secretariat for the Steering Committee, and the Secretary of the Army was the joint proponent.

(U) In addition, the Army established the CP CoE as part of the CHMR program in accordance with section 1082 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2023, codified into Federal law at 10 U.S.C. § 184. The CP CoE supported the CCMDs by providing additional expertise and analysis and relieving the CCMDs of the need to maintain their own capabilities. Furthermore, the Military Services, CCMDs, Joint Staff, USW(P), and Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security added positions to perform CHMR functions.¹⁶ The DoW requested and received additional CHMR resources from Congress. A Department-wide manpower

¹⁵ (U) At the time, the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer was the name used for the currently named Under Secretary of War (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer.

¹⁶ (U) At the time, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security was the name used for the currently named Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security.

(U) study to determine the personnel needed to support CHMR helped to determine the needs across the force. The Army also began developing the CHMR data management platform, completing the first three of five pre-production milestone releases with standardized civilian harm incident reporting and data storage capabilities.

(U) The DoW Established Policies and Guidance

(U) DoW Components created new DoW-wide and Component-level policies and guidance. For example, the USW(P) and Joint Staff issued Department-wide CHMR policies, such as DoDI 3000.17 and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) 5840.01 in December 2023 and July 2024, respectively.¹⁷ The DoW developed DoDI 3000.17 to meet the 10 U.S.C. § 134 requirement for a Department policy on civilian casualties resulting from U.S. military operations. DoDI 3000.17 states that it “will be implemented through the phased approach established by the CHMR-AP.” The CCMDs also made significant progress in developing their own CHMR policies. For example, 5 of 10 CCMDs developed draft command-specific CHMR policies by February 2025 with procedures for assessing civilian harm that are consistent with DoDI 3000.17.¹⁸

(U) The DoW Began Institutionalizing CHMR into Doctrine, Plans, Security Cooperation, Training, and Exercises

(U) The DoW began institutionalizing CHMR into major DoW processes such as doctrine, planning, security cooperation, training, and exercises. For example, to incorporate CHMR lessons learned into joint doctrine, from June through September 2024, the Joint Staff completed updates to Joint Publication (JP) 1-0, “Joint Personnel Support”; JP 2-0, “Joint Intelligence”; JP 3-0, “Joint Campaigns and Operations”; JP 3-16, “Multinational Operations”; JP 3-20, “Security Cooperation”; JP 3-33, “Joint Force Headquarters”; JP 3-60, “Joint Targeting”; and JP 5-0, “Joint Planning.”¹⁹

¹⁷ (U) CJCSI 5840.01, “Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response,” July 31, 2024.

¹⁸ (U) By February 2025, the U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Cyber Command, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and U.S. Southern Command provided us with copies of their draft command instructions on CHMR. The U.S. Central Command stated that they had drafted a command CHMR regulation that was in the staff review process. In May 2025, the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command finalized its Command Instruction 3000.01, “Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response.”

¹⁹ (U) JP 1-0, “Joint Personnel Support,” September 20, 2024.

(U) JP 2-0, “Joint Intelligence,” May 26, 2022, (Incorporating Change 1, July 5, 2024).

(U) JP 3-0, “Joint Campaigns and Operations,” June 18, 2022, (Revision 1, September 10, 2024).

(U) JP 3-16, “Multinational Operations,” March 1, 2019, (Incorporating Change 1, June 17, 2024).

(U) JP 3-20, “Security Cooperation,” September 9, 2022, (Incorporating Change 1, July 5, 2024).

(U) JP 3-33, “Joint Force Headquarters,” June 9, 2022, (Incorporating Change 1, July 12, 2024).

(U) JP 3-60, “Joint Targeting,” September 20, 2024.

(U) JP 5-0, “Joint Planning,” December 1, 2020, (Incorporating Change 1, July 1, 2024).

(U) DoW Components Integrated CHMR into Planning and Security Cooperation

(U) DoW Components took action to integrate CHMR into planning and processes, with mixed levels of completion. For example, the U.S. Africa Command incorporated CHMR concepts into its Campaign Plan, Campaign Order, and a Base Plan. The other CCMDs reported that their efforts were in progress and would follow the routine cycle of plan updates.²⁰

(U) By February 2025, the DoW made progress integrating CHMR into its security cooperation programs. For example, as of March 2024 the Defense Security Cooperation Agency created a CHMR cross-functional team to integrate CHMR into existing mission sets related to training, education, building partner and institutional capacity, and developing holistic arms transfer programs. By November 2024, the USW(P), Joint Staff, and most CCMDs hired ally and partner CHMR officers. In addition, the USW(P) published “Interim Policy Guidance on Supporting U.S. Ally and Partner Forces in Their Efforts to Mitigate and Respond to Civilian Harm” on January 17, 2025, and DoD Directive 5132.03, “Security Cooperation,” on January 16, 2025, which integrates CHMR into security cooperation programs.

(U) DoW Components Integrated CHMR into Training and Exercises

(U) DoW Components integrated CHMR into training and exercises in several ways. The Army reinstated the Red Team training school to provide Red Team training and held the first course from August 28, 2023 through October 6, 2023.²¹ The Joint Special Operations Command developed its own cognitive bias training and directed that the training be included in mission rehearsals, verification and validation training, and pre-deployment requirements. Additionally, in FY 2024, the CP CoE created and began teaching a CHMR Foundations course to help establish a baseline of DoW-wide CHMR knowledge. CCMDs and the Military Services made initial progress integrating CHMR considerations into exercises, including PANAMAX 2024, KEEN EDGE 2024, and STEEL KNIGHT.

²⁰ (U) Twelve of 14 components provided evidence that they had begun to identify and incorporate CHMR lessons learned and recommendations into their plans, processes, and tactics. Three of 10 CCMDs provided evidence that they had partially incorporated or addressed the civilian environment in their operational or contingency plans.

²¹ (U) According to JP 2-0, a red team is “an ad hoc organizational element that provides an independent capability to fully explore alternatives in plans and operations in the context of the operational environment and from the perspective of adversaries and others.” The CHMR-AP states that red teaming will support planning and operations to avoid mistaken target identification and that it is an independent function that is conducted, at times, as a deliberate step during the joint targeting cycle, but is continuous in nature.

(U) The DoW Did Not Implement the CHMR-AP on Time or Fully Meet the CHMR-AP's Guidance

(U) Overall, we determined that the DoW did not implement the CHMR-AP by the end of FY 2025 and we identified actions for which implementation may not fully meet the CHMR-AP's intent.²² In our initial implementation status assessment in February 2025, we identified 10 actions that appeared to be at risk of not being complete by the end of FY 2025. Additionally, we identified four actions for which the Components' implementation steps may not meet the intent outlined in the CHMR-AP. However, based on evidence gathered after February 2025, in July 2025, our revised assessment was that the 4 objectives that were partially and 7 objectives that were mostly complete at the time of our initial assessment were then at risk of not being complete by the end of FY 2025 because one or more Components assigned to the actions stopped implementing CHMR-AP actions and objectives.

(U) Hiring Challenges, Interdependencies Between Actions, and Inadequate Guidance and Oversight Delayed Implementation

(U) We determined that hiring challenges, lack of trained and qualified personnel, delays in early implementation of interdependent actions (actions that needed to be complete before other actions could be implemented), and inadequate guidance and oversight from the CHMR Steering Committee delayed DoW Components' ability to fully implement the CHMR-AP objectives by the end of FY 2025.

(U) DoW and OSW Components Struggled to Hire and Train Qualified Personnel

(U) Officials from 14 DoW Components told us that they had difficulties hiring and on-boarding qualified personnel and subsequently training them while simultaneously attempting to complete other CHMR-AP actions. The DoW's slow civilian hiring processes, as well as the lack of skill identifiers and established knowledge, skills, and abilities, hindered timely implementation.²³

²² (U) We explain how Actions 3.q., 5.e., 6.j., and 7.f. may not fully meet the intent of the CHMR-AP in Appendix B and "Management Advisory: The DoD Should Standardize Terminology for Targeting and Adopt Other Targeting Best Practices," (Report No. DODIG-2026-056)."

²³ (U) Some established knowledge, skills, and abilities for CHMR include targeting, red teaming, and civilian environment analysis.

(U) The CHMR-AP includes actions to create skill identifiers and career tracks for individuals that would mitigate these challenges in the future, but the actions were not going to be completed by the end of FY 2025.²⁴ Continued development of these skill identifiers and career tracks will help to ensure that the DoW is ready to quickly expand its capacity of CHMR capabilities in the event of a large-scale conflict or rapid expansion of the program.

(U) Some Interdependent CHMR-AP Actions Were Delayed

(U) In our initial February 2025 review of DoW Component responses to our requests, we found that the CCMDs would not be able to complete CHMR Baselines of Allies and Partners (CBAP) for all of their allies and partners by the end of FY 2025.²⁵ For example, the USW(P) was tasked to develop minimum standards and a framework for CBAPs, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency was tasked to develop initial CBAPs for priority countries in FY 2023. However, the USW(P) did not complete the standards and framework until October 2024.²⁶ The delays occurred because the DoW leveraged external expertise for the initial product development of CBAPs because hiring dedicated ally and partner CHMR officers and developing subject matter expertise was delayed.

(U) The CHMR Steering Committee's Inadequate Guidance and Oversight Hindered Efficient Implementation

(U) The Steering Committee did not administer the CHMR program effectively with adequate guidance and oversight. According to CHMR-AP Action 1.d., the Steering Committee is responsible for making decisions and providing direction to reduce challenges and implementation latency. The Steering Committee should have provided OSW and DoW Components with additional guidance about: (1) which Components were responsible for each task, and (2) how different Components would be expected to implement actions so that Components did not waste time and effort. The Steering Committee also should have provided better oversight through a reliable implementation tracking system.

²⁴ (EUI) [REDACTED]

²⁵ (U) As directed in DoDI 3000.17, CBAPs address the ability, willingness, norms, and practices of allies and partners to mitigate and respond to civilian harm and incorporate consideration of the ally's or partner's record regarding CHMR, as well as their programs, mechanisms, and other efforts to implement the law of war and its protections for civilians and civilian objects.

²⁶ (EUI) [REDACTED]

(U) The CHMR Steering Committee Did Not Provide Adequate Guidance

(U) The Steering Committee's oversight of CHMR-AP implementation was inadequate. For example, the Steering Committee did not establish which Components were responsible for each action until December 2024, the final year of implementation. Even then, some of the offices of primary responsibility were "DoD and OSD Components" and "combatant commands," the same imprecise language as the CHMR-AP actions, providing no additional clarity. The Steering Committee also should have provided guidance on how different Components would be expected to implement broadly assigned actions. For example, the actions for CCMDs to "conduct CBAPs for any allies and partners in their area of responsibility" do not distinguish between geographic CCMDs and functional CCMDs with a global or domain-based area of responsibility.

(U) Furthermore, the Joint Staff, in coordination with the CP CoE, should have provided additional guidance to better standardize implementation, policies, processes, and training and implement lessons learned from prior reviews. For example, CCMDs need clear standardized training on cognitive bias mitigation, civilian harm assessments and reporting, and common standards for positive identification policy. This is particularly important because most CCMDs have not recently conducted kinetic strikes, have less staff experience and existing policy or guidance related to CHMR, and had to develop much of their own command guidance and training.

(U) The CHMR Steering Committee Did Not Effectively Track CHMR-AP Implementation Status

(U) The Steering Committee also did not have a reliable system to track CHMR-AP implementation status. According to the CHMR-AP Implementation Tool User Guide, the Tool "displays CHMR-AP objectives in filterable dashboard views, showcasing progress toward completion and providing analytic dashboards depicting action progress. End-users can self-report progress toward completion of actions through input forms embedded within the application." Internal controls to verify that a Component completed implementation instead of relying on self-reports would have improved the Steering Committee's oversight.²⁷ An OUSW(P) official stated that the data in the Tool was incomplete and inaccurate.

²⁷ (U) The Joint Staff stated in its comments on the draft report that they did verify the CCMD's self-reported progress and applied internal controls. They said that Joint Staff directorates and the CCMDs had to detail their actions and provide documentation demonstrating completion. However, we were unable to access the CHMR-AP Implementation Tool in ADVANA to verify this information. Specifically, according to OUSW(P) personnel, Components have not inputted progress correctly, so a review of the data in the tool would not be beneficial for drawing conclusions or making assessments.

(U) February 2025 Proposals to Change the CHMR Program Stalled and Reversed Progress

(U) In February 2025, the Acting USW(P) and the Secretary of the Army each developed proposals for the SecWar to consider and approve options to eliminate or significantly reduce the CP CoE. The Army proposal also recommended eliminating the CHMR-AP and DoDI 3000.17. On May 29, 2025, the DoW sent a legislative proposal to Congress requesting that Congress repeal 10 U.S.C. § 184 and the requirement for the Secretary to operate a CP CoE. In June 2025, DoW FY 2026 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget estimates included cuts to CHMR program funding and eliminating positions at the CCMDs, Military Departments, OUSW(P), and Joint Staff. However, as of April 2026, the SecWar had not formally announced a decision on the proposals. Although no decision was announced, DoW Components have been inactive in their CHMR-AP responsibilities or actions to implement the CHMR-AP. For example, as of September 2025, the CHMR Steering Committee had not met since December 2024, CHMR personnel left their positions, the Army stopped funding the data management platform, the CP CoE lost large numbers of personnel and leaders, and some DoW Components were waiting to issue their command-level CHMR policies.

(U) According to CCMD officials, they were concerned about proposed cuts to the program and the impact on their capability to carry out CHMR responsibilities directed in the CHMR-AP and DoDI 3000.17. One CCMD official stated that they largely divested their CHMR personnel, functions, and responsibilities as of March 2025. Another CCMD official stated that they did not want to spend resources on actions or make future commitments for a program that may be significantly changed.

(U) Additionally, Army officials stated that they halted all CHMR activities, including funding for data management platform development and Red Team training instructors. Although the direction of the CHMR-AP is uncertain, 10 U.S.C. § 134 still requires the Department to: (1) have a civilian casualty policy that meets its specific criteria and (2) fully comply with the policy. Additionally, 10 U.S.C. § 184 still requires the Secretary to operate a CP CoE that performs the duties prescribed in law.

(U) The DoW Does Not Have the Personnel and Tools to Execute the Policy and Functions Required by Law Without Fully Implementing the CHMR-AP

(U) By not fully implementing the CHMR-AP, the DoW does not have all of the personnel and capabilities in place to fully comply with DoDI 3000.17, the CHMR policy required by 10 U.S.C. § 134. Similarly, the CP CoE does not have all of the necessary tools anticipated to perform its statutory purposes. For example, the data management platform was designed to enable the CP CoE to meet three of its nine purposes listed in 10 U.S.C. § 184. However, because the platform was not delivered to the DoW on October 1, 2025, as planned, the CP CoE does not have the tools designed to meet its statutory roles and duties assigned in DoDI 3000.17.

(U) Also, according to Joint Staff and CCMD officials, eliminating CHMR funding and personnel makes mitigating or responding to civilian harm more difficult as well as increases risk to military personnel and objectives and mission success. The Joint Staff and CCMDs also warn that target misidentification harms readiness by wasting DoW munitions and requiring staff to respond to instances of harm instead of performing their usual duties. According to Joint Staff and CCMD officials, eliminating CHMR funding and personnel reduces battle space awareness and increases the risk of civilian casualties, damaged coalitions and alliances, loss of legitimacy, increased local resistance, propaganda opportunities for adversaries, prolonged conflicts, and failed strikes.

(U) Management Comments on the Findings and Our Response

(U) The Vice Director of the Joint Staff, responding on behalf of the Director, attached additional comments for consideration in addition to his memorandum.²⁸ We considered each of the comments and made clarifications as appropriate in the body of the report. These additional comments for consideration requested additional contextual information and others also recommended modifying or deleting the conclusions. These comments recommended modifying our conclusions that:

- (U) all Objectives would not be fully implemented by the end of FY 2025 to reflect the Steering Committee's conclusion that objective 1 and its 4 associated actions were completed by December 2024; and

²⁸ (U) Management comments are provided at the end of the report.

- (U) DoW Components were not actively implementing their CHMR-AP responsibilities even though the SecWar had not announced any decision on the proposals to change the CHMR program to say that DoW Components continue to meet their statutory requirements.

(U) Additionally, they recommended deleting additional conclusions, including that:

1. (U) the Steering Committee did not assign offices of primary responsibility until December 2024, nor did they adequately track implementation status;
2. (U) inadequate guidance and oversight from the Steering Committee hindered standardization and full implementation;
3. (U) the DoW's implementation of Action 5.e. does not meet the intent of the CHMR-AP;²⁹
4. (U) the Steering Committee needed to provide guidance on how geographic versus functional combatant commands should implement broadly assigned actions; and
5. (U) the Steering Committee did not have a reliable system to track CHMR-AP implementation status.

(U) Our Response

(U) In response to comments requesting additional contextual information, we adjusted some descriptions in the report, as appropriate. For example, we clarified that organizations added positions and that DoW requested and received additional funds for these positions; added JP 3-0 to the list of updated doctrine; added the date for the first reinstated red team course; and added other footnotes and clarifications.

(U) Although the Vice Director of the Joint Staff disagreed with some of the conclusions in our finding, his response did not provide additional evidence to support his positions. We presented these preliminary findings to the Joint Staff in July 2025 and reviewed the additional evidence that they provided in response. The conclusions in this report are our independent assessments based on the evidence we obtained.

²⁹ (U) Action 5.e. directs the Joint Staff to standardize the terminology used to communicate levels of certainty across joint operations and intelligence doctrine.

(U) Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

(U) Revised Recommendation

(U) As a result of management comments, we revised Recommendation 1 to clarify our intent for the recommendation to include providing sample guidance, training, and other materials to assist CCMDs beyond the improvements formally identified through the joint lessons learned process.

(U) Recommendation 1

(U) **We recommend that the Director of the Joint Staff coordinate with the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence to provide sample guidance, training, and other information to combatant commands to standardize and expedite development of materials to implement best practices, lessons learned, and recommendations from previous civilian casualty and harm events. These may include items such as a positive identification policy; strike cell tactics, techniques and procedures; and cognitive bias mitigation training.**

(U) Joint Staff Comments

(U) The Vice Director of the Joint Staff, responding on behalf of the Director, partially agreed and requested two changes to the recommendation. Specifically, the Vice Director requested that we add the OUSW(P) as a second coordinating office and remove the word “expedite.” In addition, the Vice Director stated that the Joint Staff already collaborates with the CP CoE and provides relevant lessons learned materials including strike cell tactics, techniques, and procedures and cognitive bias training. Furthermore, the Vice Director stated that 10 U.S.C. § 134 (b)(8)(A) “assigns responsibility to the Under Secretary of War for Policy to collect and disseminate lessons learned.” The Vice Director further stated that the Joint Staff coordinates through the USW(P) when engaging with other Components and added that the USW(P) is required to designate a representative to the Joint Force Lessons Learned Steering Committee. The Vice Director stated that the Joint Staff’s five-phase lessons learned process cannot be expedited without risking the quality and comprehensive nature of the lessons learned.

(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from Vice Director did not address the specifics of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is unresolved. We acknowledge the Vice Director’s requests to modify the recommendation to add the OUSW(P) as a second coordinating office and remove the word expedite. However, we disagree that 10 U.S.C. § 134 (b)(8)(A) makes the USW(P) responsible for collecting and disseminating lessons learned.

(U) Specifically, 10 U.S.C. § 134 (b) states that the senior civilian official “shall ensure that the policy...provides for,” and lists “cultivating, developing, retaining, and disseminating lessons learned for” integrating civilian harm mitigation and response in 10 U.S.C. § 134 (b)(8)(A). The Department’s implementing policy, DoDI 3000.17, requires CCMDs to have processes in place to implement lessons learned. It also says that when the Data Management Platform is available, the CCMDs will use it to collect and archive information in a standardized format, including lessons learned. DoDI 3000.17 also requires the CP CoE to help operational commands analyze, document, and disseminate lessons learned and effective practices as well as serve as a repository of data, lessons learned, and effective practices. Therefore, we did not add the USW(P) to the recommendation. Additionally, we did not accept the suggestion to remove the term expedite because we want to ensure all CCMDs implement lessons learned, best practices, or recommendations, as well as other improvements identified from prior instances of civilian harm, in a timely manner.

(U) In addition, the Vice Director’s comments did not describe how the Joint Staff, in coordination with the CP CoE, will provide sample guidance, training, and other information to CCMDs to standardize and expedite development of materials to implement best practices, lessons learned, and recommendations from previous civilian casualty and harm events. Therefore, we request additional management comments that describe the Joint Staff’s planned actions to address the recommendation.

(U) Under Secretary of War for Policy Comments

(U) Although not required to comment, the Under Secretary of War for Policy partially agreed and stated that the Joint Staff already collaborates with the CP CoE and provides sample materials related to lessons learned from previous civilian casualty and harm events. The response also states that the Joint Staff has said that it cannot deliver materials faster but could better standardize. The Under Secretary agreed that the Joint Staff should focus on standardization instead of speed.

(U) Our Response

(U) We acknowledge the Under Secretary’s comments and agree that the Joint Staff should continue to facilitate standardization as appropriate. We clarified the language in the recommendation to reflect that the intent of the recommendation is not limited to formal lessons learned through Joint Staff processes but also includes existing lessons learned and best practices or recommendations identified from past events.

(U) Recommendation 2

(U) We recommend that the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy develop and implement a plan to ensure the DoW's compliance with the specifications of 10 U.S.C. § 134 and 10 U.S.C. § 184. This plan should specifically address the personnel, tools, and capabilities required and the risks assumed.

(U) Under Secretary of War for Policy Comments

(U) The Under Secretary of War for Policy partially agreed and stated that the DoW had complied with Public Law 155-232, § 936, as amended, codified as a note to 10 U.S.C. § 134, by appointing the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy as the required senior civilian official. Additionally, the Under Secretary stated that the DoW was in compliance with 10 U.S.C. § 184 despite recent restructuring because the CP CoE was still operating with a full-time staff. The Under Secretary did not agree with the need to develop and implement a plan to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and stated the need for the CP CoE and DoW policy to reflect current leadership's priorities and direction. The Under Secretary stated that a review of the CP CoE was underway and expected to be complete by the end of January 2026; a review of DoW policy was expected to be complete by the end of calendar year 2026.

(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from the Under Secretary partially addressed the recommendation; therefore, it is unresolved. We disagree that appointing the Deputy Secretary of War for Policy as the senior civilian official for civilian casualty matters fully satisfies the requirements of 10 U.S.C. § 134. The statute mandates that this official not only be designated but also "develop, coordinate, and oversee compliance with" the DoW's policy, ensuring it fulfills a list of specified responsibilities such as creating uniform processes and standards for recording data, reviewing and investigating allegations, acknowledging and responding to civilian harm as well as sharing best practices and lessons learned to prevent, mitigate, plan against, identify the causes of, and respond to civilian harm.

(U) Furthermore, 10 U.S.C. § 184 assigns specific tasks to the CP CoE. The Under Secretary's response did not specify how the DoW will fully implement DoDI 3000.17 or enable the CP CoE to perform its required functions. Therefore, we request additional comments detailing the specific actions, personnel, tools, and capabilities the DoW will take to comply fully with 10 U.S.C. § 134 and 10 U.S.C. § 184.

(U) Appendix A

(U) Scope and Methodology

(U) We conducted this evaluation from October 2024 through September 2025 in accordance with the “Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation,” published in December 2020 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Those standards require that we adequately plan the evaluation to ensure that objectives are met and that we perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient, competent, and relevant evidence to support the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. We believe that the evidence obtained was sufficient, competent, and relevant to lead a reasonable person to sustain the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

(U) The evaluation assessed the implementation status for all 133 actions in objectives 1 through 11 outlined in the CHMR-AP. To conduct our evaluation, we developed and issued requests for information to the CHMR Steering Committee, Military Departments, CCMs, OSW Components, Joint Staff, and intelligence agencies to gather information and supporting documentation regarding their progress implementing the CHMR-AP. We requested responses to our questions and supporting documentation that we used to verify implementation status.

(U) We reviewed the summaries of conclusions from the CHMR Steering Committee and sub-steering committee meetings and gathered documentary evidence to independently assess the effectiveness of the Steering Committee. In addition, we conducted site visits to the CP CoE office in Arlington, Virginia, and the Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to gather additional information. We also met with representatives from nine nongovernmental and civil society organizations, including the Center for Civilians in Conflict, Airwars, Save the Children, Reprieve U.S., Oxfam, InterAction, Amnesty International USA, and Human Rights Watch, to gather information about the DoW’s interactions and relationships with nongovernmental and civil society organizations related to CHMR.

(U) For each of the 11 CHMR-AP objectives and their supporting actions, we assessed the progress of each DoW Component responsible for an action against the specific requirements for each action and the overarching objective in general. We primarily relied on information gathered during our site visits, obtained from publicly available and DoW’s restricted access sources, as well as information provided by DoW Components in response to our initial request for information

(U) and more specific follow-up questions to clarify those responses to make our assessment of the DoW's implementation progress. Our initial assessment was based on information that was provided between October 2024 and February 2025. Our revised assessment was based on information gathered after February 2025.

(U) To complete our assessment, we evaluated the implementation status of each part of an action before arriving at an overall DoW assessment. First, we assessed each DoW Component's progress toward implementation of an action and placed it into one of the following five categories.

1. (U) Complete—The action or objective was completed and met the intent of the action as described in the CHMR-AP.
2. (U) Waived—The CHMR Steering Committee granted the Component a waiver and were no longer responsible for implementing the action.
3. (U) On Track—Progress was made, it met the intent, and should be complete within the timeline prescribed in the CHMR-AP.
4. (U) On Track but Delayed—Progress was made, it met the intent, and the action was not done within the timeline prescribed in the CHMR-AP, but it will be complete by the end of the initial planned CHMR-AP implementation period (the end of FY 2025).
5. (U) At Risk—We did not have sufficient evidence to assess the implementation status or if progress implementing an action either may not meet the intent of the action and objective or no plan was in place to achieve the action by the end of the initial planned CHMR-AP implementation period (end of FY 2025).

(U) Subsequently, we aggregated the Component assessments and determined the DoW's overall implementation status of each action and objective based on our criteria for each of the following four categories:

1. (U) Complete—Every assigned Component and element was completed and met the intent of the action as described in the CHMR-AP. We considered an objective complete if every action under the objective is complete.
2. (U) Mostly Complete—Over 50 percent, but not all, of the Components were considered complete, on track, or on track but delayed with the action. We considered an objective mostly complete if over 50 percent, but not all, actions under the objective were complete or mostly complete.
3. (U) Partially Complete—10 to 50 percent of the Components were considered complete, on track, or on track but delayed. We considered an objective partially complete if 10 to 50 percent of the actions were complete or mostly complete.

4. (U) At Risk—Either less than 10 percent of the Components were complete or on-track to be complete by the end of FY 2025 or the work accomplished might not have met the intent of the CHMR-AP action. We considered an objective at risk if less than 10 percent of the actions were complete or mostly complete, or if the intent of the objective would not be achieved.

(U) Use of Computer-Processed Data

(U) We did not use computer-processed data to perform this evaluation.

(U) Prior Coverage

(U) During the last 5 years, the DoW Office of Inspector General (DoW OIG) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued three reports discussing CHMR.

(U) Unrestricted DoW OIG reports can be accessed at <http://www.dodig.mil/reports.html/>. Unrestricted GAO reports can be accessed at <http://www.gao.gov>.

(U) DoW OIG

(U) DODIG-2022-038, “Evaluation of U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command Implementation of the Administrative Requirements Related to the DoD’s Law of War Policies,” November 16, 2021

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) and the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) implemented the administrative requirements related to DoW law of war (LoW) policies. The DoW OIG found that USCENTCOM and USSOCOM policies and procedures for reporting, investigating, and collecting allegations of LoW violations were not consistent with DoW policy. In addition, USCENTCOM did not periodically review in-theater LoW training to ensure that it was consistent with the DoW LoW program; USSOCOM officials conducted an annual review of Component LoW training plans and materials but did not document completion of the review, including identification and correction of deficiencies; and USCENTCOM did not fully exercise its personnel in responding to potential LoW violations.

(U) The DoW OIG recommended that the USCENTCOM and USSOCOM Commanders revise USCENTCOM Regulation 27-1 and USSOCOM Directive 525-27 to make them consistent with the revised definitions and current requirements. The DoW OIG also recommended that the USCENTCOM Commander develop procedures to execute and document a periodic review of training programs to ensure that they are consistent with the DoW LoW program; develop procedures

(U) to incorporate scenarios into command-level and Service Component exercises that require personnel to report potential LoW incidents; and develop procedures to promptly report reportable LoW incidents to the CCMD and external organizations. Additionally, the DoW OIG recommended that the USSOCOM Commander develop procedures to document the annual review of training briefings and identify any deficiencies to the components and track correction of the deficiencies.

(U) DODIG-2021-084, “Kinetic Targeting and Civilian Casualty Reporting in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility,” May 18, 2021

(U) The DoW OIG evaluated whether USCENTCOM and its subordinate elements and activities followed DoW and USCENTCOM policies and directives for targeting processes and procedures and followed processes for identifying, reviewing, and reporting civilian casualty (CIVCAS) allegations. The DoW OIG determined that USCENTCOM and its subordinate commands followed joint doctrine and USCENTCOM directives and procedures for pre-strike targeting and kinetic strikes; however, USCENTCOM and its subordinate elements’ CIVCAS documentation, reporting, and assessment teams could be improved. Based on the inconsistent implementation of USCENTCOM CIVCAS requirements, USCENTCOM reviews and reporting of CIVCAS incidents may contain administrative errors and omissions. Without complete and timely CIVCAS administrative documentation, USCENTCOM was unable to substantiate its subordinate commands’ adherence to national and USCENTCOM policy, develop and implement appropriate lessons learned, and assess potential impacts to the theater campaign plans.

(U) The DoW OIG recommended that Combined Joint Task Force–Operation Inherent Resolve and United States Forces–Afghanistan Commanders review all CIVCAS reports since completion of our assessment (November 2019) for which CIVCAS credibility assessment reports or investigations were initiated to ensure completeness and adherence to applicable policies and standard operating procedures and take corrective actions as necessary.

(U) GAO

(U) GAO-24-106257, “Civilian Harm: DoD Should Take Actions to Enhance Its Plan for Mitigation and Response Efforts,” March 2024

(U) The GAO examined how the action plan captures the studies on civilian harm and the associated recommendations, the status of the action plan’s implementation, and the extent to which the DoW addressed any challenges in implementing its action plan. The GAO concluded that the DoW August 2022

(U) action plan generally captured recommendations from nine studies on civilian harm. Officials from the OUSW(P) told the GAO that these studies were fundamental in developing the action plan. The GAO concluded that the action plan captured 61 of 68 recommendations from the nine studies. Additionally, the GAO found that the DoW began work on all 11 objectives of the action plan, initially focusing on implementing a DoW-wide workforce, reporting, and data management guidance, the CP CoE, and the Steering Committee.

(U) However, the GAO found that the DoW did not address two key challenges as it began to implement the action plan. First, some DoW Component officials did not know what constitutes improvement. For example, officials from one Component stated that they did not know what the end state was for the action plan. Establishing performance goals and measures could help the DoW target resources and adjust in the remaining years of implementation, planned through 2025. Second, some DoW Component officials were unclear on how the action plan was relevant to non-kinetic activities, such as space and cyber operations. A DoW official stated that understanding the specifics of how to mitigate and respond to civilian harm in non-kinetic activities was not a priority for the DoW, but this would become increasingly important. Without conducting an assessment to clarify how to mitigate and respond to civilian harm for non-kinetic activities, DoW Components would not be positioned to implement the action plan for those activities.

(U) The GAO recommended that the DoW establish performance goals and measures to evaluate the effect of implementing the action plan and conduct an assessment to clarify how the action plan was relevant to non-kinetic activities. The DoW did not concur with the first recommendation and partially concurred with the second recommendation.

(U) Appendix B

(U) Assessment of Implementation by Objective

(U) Based on our initial assessment in February 2025, CHMR-AP Objectives 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 11 were mostly complete, and Objectives 1, 3, 5, 8, and 10 were partially complete. However, based on evidence gathered after February 2025, our revised assessment was that the actions that were partially complete or mostly complete in our initial assessment are now considered at risk because one or more Components assigned to the actions stopped making progress on their implementation.

(U) Objective 1: The CHMR Steering Committee—Initially Partially Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 1, establishing a CHMR Steering Committee for executive oversight, was only partially implemented and is now at risk. The committee was established and chaired by the USW(P), Under Secretary of War (Comptroller), and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It convened seven times from December 2022 to December 2024. However, ending meetings jeopardizes sustained senior-level engagement. Furthermore, the OUSW(P) did not provide the requested business rules or governing documents, and inaccurate Component data further limited effective implementation. USW(P) officials denied our request to observe a meeting and verify the decision-making process and denied us access the CHMR-AP Implementation Tool used to track implementation status.

(U) Objective 2: The Civilian Protection Center of Excellence—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 2, establishing the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence, was largely successful and mostly complete. The CP CoE fulfilled its role as a hub by hosting meetings, providing training, and supporting both CCMDs and Military Services through guidance, research, and direct assistance, including its support for organizations such as the U.S. Southern Command. However, the objective was later at risk because of a loss of personnel and leadership.

(U) Objective 3: CHMR in Doctrine, Training, and Exercises—Initially Partially Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 3, incorporating CHMR into strategy, doctrine, plans, professional military education, training, and exercises, was partially complete. CCMDs began incorporating CHMR lessons, the USW(P) and Joint Staff issued policies (DoDI 3000.17 and CJCSI 5840.01), the Joint Staff updated

(U) joint doctrine, and the Military Departments initiated concept updates. CHMR officers were created in most commands, although many have recently moved to other positions. However, consistent implementation remains a challenge. The Military Departments needed to finalize their updates and the Joint Staff still needed to fully integrate civilian environment considerations and professional military education updates.

(U) We assessed that Action 3.q. may not meet the intent of the CHMR-AP. The OUSW(P) pointed to their efforts to review guidance and updated Joint Publications when we asked how they implemented Action 3.q. However, Actions 3.e. through 3.j. direct the Joint Staff to update Joint Publications and Action 3.l. directs the CCMDs to incorporate CHMR into policy and doctrine. Action 3.q. directs the USW(P) to evaluate the potential incorporation of CHMR considerations into planning guidance beyond these other actions. This action seems to refer to the USW(P)'s responsibilities to issue planning guidance outlined in Section 2.1. of DoDI 3000.15, "Plan Review and Approval Process," November 3, 2020.

(U) Objective 4: The Civilian Environment in Joint Targeting—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 4, improving knowledge of the civilian environment in joint targeting, was mostly complete because of progress on directives and policies. The issuance of DoDI 3000.17 and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Notice 3162, updates to the military standards for DoW system safety (Military Standard MIL-STD-882E), reports from the Under Secretary of War for Research and Engineering, and the Defense Intelligence Agency's designation as the producer for civilian environment analysis show policy progress.³⁰ However, this progress was limited by the lack of CCMD intelligence products incorporating this knowledge and the absence of developed career tracks and skill identifiers.

³⁰ (U) CJCS Notice 3162, "Interim Guidance to CJCSI 3162.02A, 'Methodology for Combat Assessment'," September 24, 2024.

(U) Military Standard MIL-STD-882E, "DoD Standard Practice: System Safety," May 11, 2012 (Incorporating Change 1, September 27, 2023).

(U) Objective 5: Target Misidentification and Cognitive Biases—Initially Partially Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 5, mitigating target misidentification and cognitive biases, was partially complete. CCMDs conducted Red Team training and issued policies, and the Joint Staff updated doctrine. The Army re-established a Red Team School, incorporating CHMR-focused learning, but the loss of contract funding threatens the program's future.

(U) We assessed that Action 5.e. may not meet the intent of the CHMR-AP. Although the Joint Staff promulgated standardized confidence terminology from Joint Publication 2-0 to other Joint Publications, Joint Doctrine alone does not address the intent of the action because it is official advice only and not directive. In addition, the Joint Staff did not standardize the intelligence confidence levels required for target engagement authorities to establish positive identification with defined levels of certainty. A related management advisory provided additional details about challenges with standardization in targeting terminology.³¹

(U) Objective 6: Reporting and Data Management Platform—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 6, standardizing operational reporting and civilian harm data management, was mostly complete, but that the assessment was significantly degraded. Although the Army initiated efforts to develop the data management platform, user testing revealed that it remained unusable, with significant problems in data management and interfaces. The Army's subsequent suspension of the data management platform's development severely compromised this objective.

(U) We assessed that Action 6.j. may not fully meet the intent of the CHMR-AP. The Joint Staff updated the Chairman's Critical Information Requirements Reporting Matrix on March 7, 2023, and disseminated it as required. However, the matrix relates to operational reporting of civilian harm incidents and does not provide guidance to the CCMDs regarding which additional reports are required, such as initial reviews, civilian harm assessments, and civilian harm investigations; the timelines for providing these additional assessments or investigations; and whether they should be provided to the same office that receives the Chairman's Critical Information Requirements reporting. In addition, Joint Staff officials stated that the data management platform would play a critical role in providing standardized reporting data, but the Joint Staff did not provide guidance on the integration of the data management platform into CCMD reporting procedures.

³¹ (U) DODIG-2026-056, "Management Advisory: DoD Should Standardize Terminology Used for Targeting and Adopt Other Targeting Best Practices," February 12, 2026.

(U) Objective 7: Assessment and Investigation Procedures—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 7, establishing procedures for assessing and investigating civilian harm, was mostly complete. The OSW(P) and Joint Staff published the relevant DoDI and CJCSI, and the Joint Staff updated doctrine.

(U) In addition, most CCMDs designated coordinators and established Civilian Harm Assessment Cells (CHACs). However, implementation issues remain because only a few CCMDs exercised the CHAC capabilities, and a lack of training for the CHAC workforce persists.

(U) We assessed that Action 7.f. may not meet the intent of the CHMR-AP. Although the Joint Staff published CJCSI 5840.01, which provides further guidance to DoDI 3000.17, it did not address the action requirement to incorporate guidance on the minimum standards for Civilian Harm Assessment Cells to conduct civilian harm assessments, such as a standard list of questions that should be answered, information sources that should be considered, and processes that promote organizational learning and information management.

(U) Objective 8: Guidance on Responding to Civilian Harm—Initially Partially Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 8, reviewing DoW guidance on responding to civilian harm, was partially complete. A DoDI was issued, a legislative proposal was submitted, the website was maintained, and the public affairs guidance was published. However, key pieces of guidance, including the USW(P)'s interim regulations, still needed to be updated and were at risk.

(U) Objective 9: CHMR in Security Cooperation Programs—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 9, incorporating CHMR into security cooperation programs, was mostly complete. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency created a CHMR team to integrate CHMR into programs and activities across the security cooperation enterprise. In addition, the USW(P), Joint Staff, and Military Departments hired ally and partner CHMR officers, and the USW(P) developed guidance and completed a CBAP framework. Completion relied on the CCMDs' to complete CBAPs, but two functional CCMDs were granted waivers.

(U) Objective 10: CHMR in Multinational Operations—Initially Partially Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 10, focused on CHMR in multinational operations, was partially complete. The Joint Staff updated JP 3-16, but many actions remain incomplete, and the integration of CHMR into multinational exercises has been inconsistent with the Army and Air Force not yet integrating CHMR into exercises.

(U) Objective 11: Dedicated CHMR Positions—Initially Mostly Complete, Revised to At Risk

(U) We determined that Objective 11, focused on creating dedicated positions for CHMR, was mostly complete. However, many commands reassigned personnel away from dedicated CHMR positions and the DoW's FY 2026 budget proposal largely eliminated funding for those positions.

(U) Management Comments

(U) Under Secretary of War for Policy



POLICY

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-2000

DEC 11 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF WAR INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT: Under Secretary of War for Policy Response to Recommendations in the September 30, 2025, Department of War Office of Inspector General Draft Report, "Evaluation of the Department of Defense's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan" (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)

This response does not indicate concurrence with the assertions or characterizations in other parts of the draft report. Please find below our specific response to each recommendation:

DoW OIG RECOMMENDATION 1: "We recommend that the Director of the Joint Staff coordinate with the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence (CP CoE) provide sample guidance, training, and other information to combatant commands to standardize and expedite development of materials to implement lessons learned from previous civilian casualty and harm events. These may include items such a positive identification policy; strike cell tactics, techniques and procedures; and cognitive bias mitigation training." Department of War (DoW) Office of Inspector General (OIG) Draft Report at p. 12.

USWP RESPONSE: Policy partially concurs with DoW OIG's Recommendation 1. Although this recommendation is primarily directed toward the Joint Staff, Policy is requested to respond to all recommendations. First, the Joint Staff already collaborates with the CP CoE and provides components with sample materials related to lessons learned from previous civilian casualty and harm events, including examples of strike cell tactics, techniques, procedures, and cognitive bias mitigation training. Second, although the Joint Staff has indicated that it cannot further expedite the delivery of these materials, it acknowledges opportunities for better standardization of resources. Therefore, our partial concurrence reflects agreement to focus on standardization rather than expedited delivery. The estimated completion date for this task is December 31, 2026.

DoW OIG RECOMMENDATION 2: "We recommend that the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy develop and implement a plan to ensure the Department's compliance with the specifications of 10 U.S.C. § 134 and 10 U.S.C. § 184. This plan should specifically address the personnel, tools, and capabilities required and the risks assumed." DoW OIG Draft Report at p. 13.

USWP RESPONSE: Policy partially concurs with DoW OIG's Recommendation 2. The Department has complied with Section 936 of Public Law 115-232, as amended by Section 1282 of Public Law 116-92 (codified as a note to 10 U.S.C. § 134) through the Under Secretary of War for Policy's designation of the Deputy Under Secretary of War for Policy as the senior civilian official contemplated in the provision. In addition, the Department continues to comply with 10 U.S.C. § 184, which requires the Department to operate the CP CoE. Despite recent



(U) Under Secretary of War for Policy (cont'd)

restructuring, the CP CoE continues to operate with dedicated full-time staff. Although we do not agree with the need to develop and implement a plan to ensure compliance with statutory requirements, we believe it is prudent to ensure that the CP CoE and Departmental policy reflect the current leadership's priorities and direction. A review of the CP CoE is underway and is estimated to be completed by January 31, 2026. A review of related Departmental policy is estimated to be completed by December 31, 2026.

My point of contact for this matter, [REDACTED] SOLIC/IWCT, may be reached at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED].



Elbridge A. Colby

(U) Director of the Joint Staff



THE JOINT STAFF
WASHINGTON, DC

DJSM-0001-26
5 January 2026

Reply Zip Code:
20318-0300

MEMORANDUM FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: (CUI) [REDACTED]

1. (CUI) [REDACTED]

a. (U) Existing Coordination. The Joint Staff actively collaborates with the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence and provides components with relevant lessons-learned materials including strike cell tactics, techniques, and procedures and cognitive bias training.

b. (U) Statutory Alignment. This recommendation aligns with the statutory requirements outlined in title 10, U.S. Code, section 134(8)(A), which assigns responsibility to the Under Secretary of War for Policy (USW(P)) to collect and disseminate lessons learned.

c. (U) Whole-of-Government Approach. As a whole-of-government effort, the Joint Staff coordinates through USW(P) when engaging other Department of War components. Office of the Secretary of War principals are required to designate representatives to the Joint Force Lessons Learned Steering Committee.

d. (U) Process Considerations. The Joint Staff's five-phase lessons-learned process, which addresses doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and policy, requires deliberate execution to ensure thoroughness and effectiveness. Expediting this process could compromise the quality and comprehensive nature of the lessons learned.

3. (U) Additional comments are attached for consideration. The Joint Staff looks forward to the release of the final report and implementing corrective action.

4. (U) The Joint Staff point of contact is [REDACTED], U.S. Marine Corps; Assistant Deputy Director for Counter Threats and International Cooperation, J-5; [REDACTED]

PAUL C. SPEDERO, Jr., RADM, USN
Vice Director, Joint Staff

Attachment:
As stated

Controlled By: Joint Staff J5-DDCIC
CUI Category: PRIVILEGE
LIC: HBCOM

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
CUI	1	1	Findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	2	1	Findings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The Department of War (DoW) already complies with federal law to mitigate and respond to civilian harm. The purpose of the CHMR-AP is to fulfill a congressional mandate to expand and strengthen efforts to mitigate harm during armed conflicts.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: "DoW components have stopped funding for the CHMR data management platform, stopped holding Steering Committee meetings, lost or reassigned many of the personnel dedicated to CHMR, and lost personnel and leadership at the CP CoE. As a result, the DoW may not comply with Department of Defense Instruction 3000.17, <i>Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response its civilian casualties and harm policy</i>, a policy required by federal law."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	3	1	Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The Office of the Secretary of War (OSW) is included in the process to develop lessons learned as it collects and shares information. Additionally, OSW principals have a representative on the Joint Force Lessons Learned General Officer SC.</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

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Controlled By: Joint Staff J-5
 CUI Category: PRIVILEGE
 LDC: FEDCON

CUI

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Include USW(P) as the Department's policy proponent and remove the word "expedite," since the joint lessons-learned process consists of five phases.</p> <p>"The Director of the Joint Staff should work with the Office of the Under Secretary of War for Policy (USW(P)) and the CP CoE to provide sample materials that for components can use to expedite implementation of lessons learned."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	
U	4	5	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: JS codified the office of primary responsibility and office of coordinating responsibility for each action item in a memo that was approved at the sub-SC level and the SC. The SC tracked the implementation status, and each DoW component reported its progress on action items to USW through quarterly reports before transitioning to individual deep dives for each objective and updating information in Advana.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove this sentence: "For example, the Steering Committee did not assign offices of primary responsibility for completing actions until December 2024, nor did they adequately track implementation status."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>
U	5	5	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The SC met quarterly on a regular basis (JS helped prepare for the meetings and attended to discuss issues and provide guidance).</p> <p>Additionally, JS documentation shows deviations from certain CHMR-AP action items the SC approved, reflecting changes in implementation.</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>

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(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON-CONCURRENCE?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove this sentence: <u>"Additionally, inadequate guidance and oversight from the CHMR Steering Committee hindered standardization and full implementation."</u></p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	
EUU	6	5	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	7	6	Footnote section	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: Footnote 9 is duplicated. It appears properly on page 6 and appears again on page 7. The footnote number on page 7 should be 10 instead of 9 again. This will keep the footnotes in proper numerical sequence. This also corresponds to the text of the document that is referenced in the footnote.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: In the footnotes section on page 7, change footnote number 9 to footnote number 10.</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>USSOUTHCOM</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	8	6	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: JS did not add positions to perform CHMR functions using additional funds/resources. JS was assigned two billets to carry out CHMR functions within J-5—other positions within the JS that addressed CHMR activities were considered collateral duties.</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"

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					<p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove "JS" from sentence: "Furthermore, the Military Services, CCMDs, <u>Joint Staff</u>, USD(P), and Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security added positions to perform CHMR functions funded with additional resources."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	[REDACTED]
U	9	7	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The JS also made updates to Joint Publication (JP) 1, Volume 1 in August 2023 and JP 3-0, <i>Joint Campaigns and Operations</i>, on 26 July 2024 (via change notice).</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Revise paragraph to reflect additional updated JPs: "...the "Joint Staff completed updates to Joint Publication (JP) 1, Volume 1 in August 2023, JP 3-0, <i>Joint Campaigns and Operations</i>, on 26 July 2024 (via change notice), Joint Publication (JP) 1-0, <i>Joint Personnel Support</i>..."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	J-5/CTIC [REDACTED]
U	10	8	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) divested its Red Team training due to funding constraints. TRADOC courses did not meet the required funding threshold. JS and Civilian Protection Center of Excellence (CP CoE) have begun collaborating with the Center for Advanced Red Teaming at the University at Albany to explore options for providing Red Team training to the CCMDs.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove paragraph or add the date the Army reinstated the Red Team training school.</p>	J-5/CTIC [REDACTED]

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"						
CLASS	#	PAGE	PARA	BASIS FOR NON CONCUR?	COMMENTS, JUSTIFICATION, AND ORIGINATOR JUSTIFICATION FOR RESOLUTION	COMPONENT AND POC NAME, PHONE, AND E-MAIL
					<p>"DoD Components integrated CHMR into training and exercises in several ways. The Army reinstated the Red Team training schoolhouse to provide Red Team training."</p> <p>"DoD Components integrated CHMR into training and exercises in several ways. The Army reinstated the Red Team training schoolhouse to provide Red Team training on (month & year)."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	
U	11	8	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: JS and OSW leadership agreed on the way forward on action item 5.e., and action item 5.e did not direct the JS to establish positive identification (aspect of targeting) with defined levels of certainty. The requirement was to standardize the terminology used to communicate levels of certainty across joint operations and intelligence doctrine. This action item does not require that the task be implemented in an official directive, but calls for "levels of certainty across joint operations and intelligence doctrine."</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove action item 5.e from the list of action items in footnote 14.</p> <p>"Overall, we determined the CHMR- AP will not be implemented by the end of FY 2025 and identified a few areas where implementation may not fully meet the intent... Additionally, we identified four actions where the Components' implementation steps may not meet the intent outlined in the CHMR- AP."</p> <p>Footnote 14: "We explain how Actions 3.q., 5.e., 6.j., and 7.f. may not fully meet the intent of the CHMR-AP."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>[Redacted]</p>

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"

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EUU	12	9	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Originator Reasoning:</p> <p>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>"The CHMR-AP included actions to create skill identifiers and create career tracks for individuals that would mitigate these challenges in the future, but the actions will not be completed by the end of FY 2025."</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
EUU	13	9	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification:</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

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(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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					[REDACTED]	
U	14	10	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The terms "any" and "area of responsibility" are inherently inclusive—no need to differentiate between geographic and functional CCMDs.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove this example: "The Steering Committee also should have provided guidance on how different Components would be expected to implement broadly assigned actions. For example, the actions for CCMDs to "conduct CBAPs for any allies and partners in their area of responsibility" do not distinguish between geographic CCMDs and functional CCMDs with a global or domain based area of responsibility."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	15	11	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: Implementation was tracked through Advana, and CCMDs self-reported progress that JS verified and updated. JS applied internal controls via taskers requiring 1-star coordination. CCMDs and Joint Directorates were obligated to detail the steps taken toward implementation</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"

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					<p>and/or provide documentation demonstrating completion, as many action items required tangible evidence to substantiate and confirm completion. A tool called the CHMR-AP Implementation Tool was not used.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove paragraph: "The Steering Committee also did not have a reliable system to track CHMR-AP implementation status. According to the CHMR-AP Implementation Tool User Guide, the Tool "displays CHMR-AP objectives in filterable dashboard views, showcasing progress towards completion and providing analytic dashboards depicting action progress. End users can self-report progress towards completion of actions through input forms embedded within the application". Internal controls to verify that a Component completed implementation instead of relying upon self-reports would have improved the Committee's oversight. An OSD(P) official acknowledged that the data in the Tool was incomplete and inaccurate.</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	[REDACTED]
U	16	11	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: Although no decision has been made regarding the CHMR Enterprise, statutory and reporting requirements for CHMR remain in effect.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Revise sentence: "Although no decision has been announced, DoW components <i>continue to meet statutory requirements.</i>" have been inactive in their CHMR-AP responsibilities or actions to implement some of the proposals."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	J-5/CTIC [REDACTED]
U	17	12	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: This paragraph, except for the last two italicized sentences, is taken from the JS Reclama.</p>	J-5/CTIC [REDACTED]

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"

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					<p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Replace "CCMDs" with "JS" throughout paragraph.</p> <p>"Also, according to the JS CCMD officials, eliminating CHMR funding and personnel makes it harder to mitigate and respond to civilian harm and increases risk to military personnel, mission success and military objectives. The JS CCMDs also warn that target misidentification harms readiness by wasting DoD ammunitions and requiring staff to respond to instances of harm instead of performing their usual duties. According to the JS CCMDs officials, eliminating CHMR funding and personnel reduces battle space awareness and increases the risk of civilian casualties, damaged coalitions and alliances, loss of legitimacy, increased local resistance, propaganda opportunities for adversaries, prolonged conflicts, and failed strikes. <i>Therefore, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy should develop and implement a plan to ensure the Department's compliance with the specifications of 10 U.S.C. § 134 and 10 U.S.C. § 134. This plan should specifically address the personnel, tools, and capabilities required and the risks assumed. (Recommendation 2)</i>"</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	18	12	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The recommendation to JS is also a statutory requirement for USW(P) under title 10, U.S. Code, section 134(8)(A). USW is included in this process to develop lessons learned, as they are also required to collect and share information.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: This recommendation must also reflect USW(P) as part of this effort and remove the word "expedite," because the joint lessons learned is a disciplined process that consists of five phases.</p> <p>"We recommend that the Director of the Joint Staff coordinate with the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence and USW(P) to provide sample guidances trainings and other information to combatant commands to standardize and</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

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(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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					<p>expedite development of materials to implement lessons learned from previous civilian casualty and harm events. These may include items such a positive identification policy; strike cell tactics, techniques and procedures; and cognitive bias mitigation training."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	
EUU	19	18	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
U	20	21	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The purpose of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Critical Information Requirement Reporting Matrix (CJCS CCIR) is not to provide guidance to the CCMDs on what additional reports are</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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DoD ISSUANCE COORDINATION RESPONSE: "Evaluation of the DoD's Implementation of the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (Project No. D2025-DEV0PD-0003.000)"

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					<p>required or to whom they must be sent, but instead is intended to establish the requirement for when an action necessitates a notification, which was completed for action item 6.j. The CJCS CCIR also applies to Military Services. The Data Management Platform (DMP), which was to be provided by the U.S. Army, would have standardized this process.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove paragraph: <u>"We assessed that Action 6.j may not fully meet the intent of the CHMR-AP. Joint Staff updated the Chairman's Critical Information Requirements Reporting Matrix on March 7, 2023, and disseminated it as required. However, the matrix pertains to operational reporting of civilian harm incidents and does not provide guidance to the CCMDs regarding what additional reports are required such as initial reviews, civilian harm assessments, and civilian harm investigations, the timelines for providing these additional assessments or investigations, and whether they should be provided to the same office that receives the Chairman's Critical Information Requirements reporting."</u></p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	[REDACTED]
U	21	21	2	□	<p>Coordinator Comment and Justification: The DMP and the CJCS CCIR serve distinct purposes. The DMP functions as a system repository designed to collect and manage data related to civilian harm, including investigations, assessments, condolence payments, and similar matters. The CJCS CCIR is a reporting matrix used to identify operational actions deemed reportable through the National Military Command Center, determining whether an event requires formal notification. The DMP was never intended to replace the CJCS CCIR (the CHMR-AP would have explicitly directed such a change). Instead, the CHMR-AP called for the establishment of the DMP and updates to CJCS CCIR reporting requirements. There was no need for JS to issue guidance suggesting that the DMP supersede the CJCS CCIR.</p> <p>Coordinator Recommended Change: Remove paragraph:</p>	<p>J-5/CTIC</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

(U) Director of the Joint Staff (cont'd)

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					<p>"In addition, Joint Staff officials stated that the Data Management Platform will play a critical role in providing standardized reporting data, but the Joint Staff did not provide guidance on the integration of the DMP into CCMD reporting procedures, such as whether the Data Management Platform's reporting process would replace the traditional Chairman's Critical Information Requirements reporting process for initial notification of civilian harm incidents."</p> <p>Originator Response:</p> <p>Originator Reasoning:</p>	

(U) Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBAP	Civilian Harm Baseline Assessment of Allies and Partners
CCMD	Combatant Command
CHAC	Civilian Harm Assessment Cell
CHMR	Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response
CHMR-AP	Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan
CIVCAS	Civilian Casualty
CJCSI	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction
CP CoE	Civilian Protection Center of Excellence
DoDI	DoD Instruction
JP	Joint Publication
LOAC	Law of Armed Conflict
LoW	Law of War
OSW	Office of the Secretary of War
OSW(P)	Office of the Secretary of War for Policy
SecWar	Secretary of War
USCENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
USW(P)	Under Secretary of War for Policy



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For more information about DoW OIG reports or activities, please contact us:

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